

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01

NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 EB-11 L-03 PM-07 DODE-00 SCS-03

SCA-01 FCSC-01 VO-03 TRSE-00 SAM-01 DRC-01 OMB-01

SP-03 SSO-00 SAJ-01 /106 W

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P R 101000Z SEP 74

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8582

INFO USIA WASHDC

USDOC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1600

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, EGEN, CPRS, CASC, CGEN, PROP OVIP (POPOV, IVAN), B

U

SUBJECT: BULGARIA ANNOUNCES MOVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH US

REF: A. SOFIA 1598; B. SOFIA 1506

1. FOLLOWING IS FULLER RECORD OF CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER MLADENOV SEPT 7 REPORTED REF A.

2. RE RELEASE OF AMERICAN CITIZEN MARKS, THERE WAS SOME
BANTER THAT THE BULGARIANS COULDN'T KEEP SOMEONE BY THE NAME
OF "MARK" IN JAIL AND A CLAIM THAT THIS HAD COME TO HIS ATTENTION
ONLY WHEN I MENTIONED THE MARKS CASE IN MY CONVERSATION WITH HIM
AUG 26. (ACTUALLY, WHILE WE HAD NOT RAISED THE CASE WITH MLADENOV
PERSONALLY, WE HAS BEEN ASSURED EARLIER THAT IT HAD THE ATTENTION
OF "HIGHEST LEVELS" OF FOREIGN MINISTRY.)

3. RE LIFTING OF THE JAMMING OF VOA, THIS HAS MEANWHILE ACTUALLY
HAPPENED AS VERIFIED BY US HERE. DEPT WILL HAVE NOTED THAT MLADENOV
SO PHRASED HIS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT BULGARIANS DID NOT ACTUALLY ADMIT
TO HAVING JAMMED VOA. HE COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED OUR BULGARIAN
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LANGUAGE PROGRAMS WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN SPIRIT OF FAIRNESS AND DETENTE

AND NOT IN SPIRIT OF "HOSTILE PROPAGANDA". I ONLY NODDED AND HE WENT ON TO NEXT SUBJECT -- ONLY TO RETURN TO THE MATTER OF BROADCASTS LATER WHEN HE COMMENTED ABOUT RFE.

4. RE DIVIDED FAMILIES, WHAT HE SAID AMOUNTED TO PROMISE THAT SOME, BUT NOT NECESSARILY ALL, APPLICANTS WOULD RECEIVE EXIT VISAS. EARLIER HE HAD SAID (REF B) THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY KNOWS OF ONLY 19 CASES, TO WHICH I HAD RESPONDED THAT EARLIER CASES WOULD PROBABLY COME FORWARD AGAIN IF THERE IS SOME MOVEMENT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. WE ARE CAREFULLY MONITORING VISA APPLICATIONS TO SEE HOW FAR AND HOW FAST BULGARIANS ARE MOVING IN IMPLEMENTATION OF MLADENOV'S STATEMENT.

5. RE BONDHOLDERS CLAIMS, MLADENOV WHO WAS IN A HURRY SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND DETAILS OF THIS COMPLEX PROBLEM BUT IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET COMPETENT AUTHORITIES ON BOTH SIDES TOGETHER. HERE DEPT WILL RECALL THAT WE HAVE A POTENTIAL VICIOUS CIRCLE AND UNNECESSARY DEADLOCK. THE BULGARIANS WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT FROM THE BONDHOLDERS PROTECTIVE COUNCIL HOW MANY US BONDHOLDERS THERE ARE, WHAT IS THE AMOUNT OF THEIR CLAIM, AND WHAT THEY WILL SETTLE FOR; WHEREAS THE COUNCIL TAKES POSITION THAT BULGARIA MUST MAKE AN OFFER, OR MUST AT LEAST RESUME PAYMENT OF INTEREST, WHEREUPON INDIVIDUAL BONDHOLDERS WILL COME FORWARD AND THEN DIMENSION OF PROBLEM CAN BE DETERMINED. THE BULGARIANS ARE EVIDENTLY PREPARED TO MAKE A DEAL, BUT THEY WILL NOT BUY A PIG IN A POKE. A WAY WILL HAVE TO BE FOUND FOR BONDHOLDERS PROTECTIVE COUNCIL TO ADVERTISE THAT IT IS ABOUT TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE BULGARIANS AND TO ASK BONDHOLDERS TO COME FORWARD. ACTION IS REQUIRED IN THIS MATTER IN LIGHT OF IMMINENT VISIT OF VICE PREMIER POPOV TO THE US. IF HE GETS THE RUNAROUND FROM THE BONDHOLDERS PROTECTIVE COUNCIL, IN THE SENSE OF THE COUNCIL BEING UNABLE EVEN TO NAME AN ORDER OF MAGNITUDE FOR A SETTLEMENT, THEN IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE THE EARLY FORWARD MOVEMENT FOR WHICH GOB SEEMS NOW PREPARED.

6. RE RFE, MLADENOV INDICATED THAT BULGARIAN GOVT IS COMPLETELY AWARE THAT IT IS SEPARATE AND DISTINCT FROM VOA; BUT HE ALSO INDICATED AWARENESS THAT WHILE RFE IS NOT AN ORGAN OF THE USG, THERE IS AS HE PUT IT "A FINANCIAL CONNECTION". CONSEQUENTLY, CONFIDENTIAL

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HE SAID, THERE IS A PRESUMPTION THAT THE USG HAS AT LEAST INDIRECTLY SOME INFLUENCE ON RFE'S EDITORIAL CONTENT. HE PRETENDED NOT TO RAISE THIS POINT OFFICIALLY ("PLEASE, MR. AMBASSADOR, DO NOT TAKE NOTES, I DON'T WANT THIS TO DISTURB THE CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE OF THIS CONVERSATION") BUT HIS MESSAGE WAS THAT SOME RESTRAINT OF RFE "AND THE FREEDOM STATION" (RADIO LIBERTY?) WOULD BE WELCOMED. IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT GOB REGARDS RFE AS A BURR UNDER THE SADDLE OF RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN BULGARIA AND THE US, AND WHILE THEY ARE

NOT MAKING AN ISSUE OF IT FORMALLY THEY HOPESPIRIT OF DETENTE WILL
BE REFLECTED IN MODERATION IN THE TONE OF THAT STATION.

7. AT THE END OF INTERVIEW I COMMENTED THAT MEASURES ANNOUNCED
BY MLADENOV COULD NOT FAIL TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BROADENING OF
RELATIONS THAT IS DESIRED BY BOTH OUR GOVERNMENTS. I DID NOT THANK
HIM FOR THE MEASURES BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO ME THAT MOST OF THEM
ARE NOT FAVORS DONE TO US BUT REPRESENT ADJUSTMENT OF POLICIES
TO MEET LONG OUTSTANDING LEGITIMATE US COMPLAINTS.

8. THIS LEAVES THE MOST IMPORTANT OF MLADENOV'S POINTS, THE ONE
ABOUT POPOV CARRYING A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV
WHICH GOB WOULD WANT HIM TO PRESENT PERSONALLY TO PRESIDENT FORD.
THE RECORD OF REF A ON THIS SUBJECT IS COMPLETE AND ACCURATE.
I AM COMMENTING ON THAT ASPECT IN SEPARATE MESSAGE.
HERZ

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